

Ecosystem Coordination Board Members

We are pleased to share the Partnership's DRAFT Dashboard of Ecosystem Indicators with you!

This work comes to you now following our Leadership Council meeting last week (and the Science Panel, State Caucus and Cross-Partnership Work Group on Performance Management meetings during the weeks prior). As we approach the next Leadership Council meeting in July, the Leadership Council is scheduled to approve the DRAFT Dashboard for the coming year.

Over the past several weeks we have worked closely with a fine team of scientists and other community leaders as part of a process to develop the Partnership's Dashboard of Ecosystem Indicators. Our Team has become known as the Indicators Action Team.

By state law, ecosystem indicators are required for us to gauge and improve the health of Puget Sound. As you may also be aware, we are now nearly two years over due (coming up in July) in producing that set of agreed upon ecosystem indicators.

Our Team has routinely met either in-person or by Webex teleconference each week since early March in support of this indicators development process. We plan to continue to meet as necessary as a Team to continue to consider and digest the input we receive and to continue to improve the Dashboard based on the good ideas we hear.

Our goal is to have the Leadership Council approve the new Ecosystem Indicators Dashboard in July. Once approved, we plan to implement that Dashboard throughout the coming year (collecting, cleansing and analyzing the data) with an eye toward designing and improving the Dashboard each year thereafter based on what we learn from the data, from science and from our citizens going forward and re-submitting it to the Leadership Council on an annual basis thereafter along with any planned improvements to the Dashboard for the next year of its use. Our collective aim is to ultimately drive behavioral change in each and every community surrounding Puget Sound using the Partnership's dashboard tool.

We are pleased with the progress we have been making, and would like to know what you, our Ecosystem Coordination Board members and other key stakeholders think of the results of our Dashboard work at this time. Simply put, we would very much appreciate your input on the DRAFT Dashboard as we look toward your July meeting and the Leadership Council's planned approval of the Dashboard at their meeting on July 29th & 30th.

In thinking about this set of issues with us, please keep in mind that we are striving to ensure that our dashboard indicators are both *ecologically important* and *socially resonant* (to quote Tim Quinn during one of our Team meetings). With everyone's help and support, that's what the Puget Sound Dashboard of Ecosystem Indicators will be ... ecologically important and socially resonant.

Our 20 Dashboard indicators are now proposed for your review, as follows:

- 1) **Funding for the Sound** - Federal. State and local funding allocated to the Action Agenda
- 2) **Action Agenda Engagement** - % of Action Agenda items actively being addressed
- 3) **Puget Sound Trends Index** - See Puget Sound Regional Council website

- 4) **Puget Sound Behavioral Index** – This indicator is ‘under construction’ and is scheduled to be initially deployed in late 2011 by the Puget Sound Partnership. It will assess our communities’ support of, and willingness to support our efforts to make the Sound healthy by 2020
- 5) **Commercial Fisheries Harvest (tribal and non-tribal)** - Annual wild harvest (pounds) of tribal and non-tribal commercial fisheries (salmon, crab, shellfish, ground fish, shrimp) in Puget Sound (wild)
- 6) **Swimming Beaches** - Percent of core beaches meeting water quality standards during swim season (allowing one exceedance)
- 7) **Shellfish Beds Restored** - Number of acres of shellfish bed growing areas impacted by degraded or declining water quality where harvest restrictions have been lifted
- 8) **Number of recreational fishing permits sold annually in Puget Sound** - Recreational fishing permit sales
- 9) **Marine Water Quality** - Marine Water Quality Index
- 10) **Freshwater Quality** - Freshwater Water Quality Index
- 11) **Water Availability** - Percent of monitored stream flows below critical levels
- 12) **Salmon** - Fish Abundance; Wild Chinook salmon population counts with distribution (not hatchery salmon)
- 13) **Orcas** - Orcas abundance; Southern Resident killer whale population trends
- 14) **Pacific Herring** – Pacific Herring spawning biomass - status & trends
- 15) **Terrestrial Bird Species** - Marbled murrelets and other birds abundance; breeding bird counts for composite (index) for a variety of species or selected other terrestrial species
Birds/km² sampled x area
- 16) **Shoreline Armoring** - %s of freshwater and marine water shorelines armored
- 17) **Eelgrass** - Areal extent (number of acres) of eelgrass in greater Puget Sound
- 18) **Toxics in fish** - As relates to pacific herring, English sole and salmon
- 19) **Toxics in sediment** - Health of sediments with respect to concentrations of toxics and abundance and structure of living organisms
- 20) **Land Use/Land Cover** - % land use/land cover; % impervious surface; Extent and condition of ecological systems (land cover by type)

This dashboard development process has truly been a labor of love involving level-headed thinking, great debate and passionate exchanges around the table. We have gotten to know each other and to more and more effectively listen to each others’ viewpoints along the way, as well. This has resulted in our developing and following a wonderful, inter-disciplinary team approach to collaborative, inter-organizational problem solving.

We would like to recognize our tremendous Indicators Action Team members who have so generously contributed both their time and their talents to this critically essential team effort:

- Leonard Bauer, Department of Commerce (360-725-3055)
- Helen Berry, Department of Natural Resources (360-902-1052)
- Mary Beth Brown, Puget Sound Partnership (360-725-5451)
- Rob Duff, Department of Ecology (360-407-6699)
- Angela Grout, US Environmental Protection Agency (206-553-0332)
- Ken Currens, Northwest Indian Fisheries (360-528-4374)
- Phil Levin, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (206-860-3473)
- Tim Quinn, Department of Fish and Wildlife (360-902-2414)
- Trina Wellman, Northern Economics, Inc. (206-618-4814)
- Jacques White, Long Live the Kings (206-382-9555)
- Bethany Johnson, University of Washington (student)
- Brian Payne, University of Washington (student)

Thanks to the work of these passionate professionals on our Team (including two of our esteemed Science Panel members) we have been developing a DRAFT Ecosystem Indicators Dashboard involving a growing number of people's input, and bring this set of issues for your review and comment now. Please feel free to share this letter and the other associated attachments with other interested leaders leading toward the Leadership Council's approval of the Dashboard in July. We would like to hear from you with any input or comments that you might have in this regard.

In addition to the above-noted list of 20 Dashboard indicators, the DRAFT Dashboard is also attached in the form of an Excel spreadsheet workbook. This is a working Indicators Action Team document. When reading it, please kindly focus on the third tab of that workbook, the Dashboard tab, and most specifically the green highlighted Dashboard Indicator cells on that page. The other tabs of the Team's work show the progression of thought that the Team went through to come up with the above-noted 20 Dashboard indicators.

As part of the team process we followed, we have also considered what we believe needs to be an ongoing dialogue about what our collective communities' priorities are, deciding on those priorities each year as we proceed, and then determining together how we will collectively as a result proceed to improve the health of the Sound based on that greater sense of focus amongst us that the Dashboard provides.

We believe that we will need to continuously validate our dashboard indicators with our citizens and scientists as we move forward, and continue to do so each year as we engage them in the Partnership's efforts to improve the health of the Sound. To this end, it is critical to our success that our Dashboard Indicators be both 'citizen-informed' and 'citizen-driven' performance measures in the purest sense of those terms.

PLEASE NOTE: The Team's Dashboard development work this spring has been accomplished in tandem with the work of the various authors of the Puget Sound Science Update, including Phil Levin (who as you will note from our Team roster above also served on our Team). **This is a truly significant accomplishment!** With Phil, Trina Wellman and Tim Quinn's team leadership, our Indicators Action Team was able to follow the approach laid out in the Levin, et al Puget Sound Science Update Chapter 1a (Section 5.6-5.8) using all of the ecosystem indicators evaluated in the Science Update Chapter 1a process. In this regard, you will also find attached two reports about the process that the Indicators Action Team followed to further describe both what has been accomplished and presenting the linkages between the Science Update process that Phil Levin and our other Science Update authors led and our new Dashboard Indicators. One of these reports is from Phil Levin about the process we followed to bring forward our 12 Natural Dimension Dashboard indicators. The other report is from Trina Wellman. It describes the process followed by the Team concerning our five Human Dimension Dashboard indicators. During next month's Ecosystem Coordination meeting, we plan to present Phil's work and to describe the process that our Team followed with his, Trina's and Tim's leadership.

We ask that everyone please recognize that our Team's Dashboard work truly builds upon all of the previously accomplished and important Puget Sound indicators work that's gone on over the years. This includes our past and continuing work with Open Standards, Sandie O'Neill's indicator-focused work last year, our various natural resources GMAP efforts over time and all of the work conducted by the many great indicators-focused thinkers on whose shoulders we now stand in bringing this work forward to you. Collaboratively leading with an agreed upon Dashboard of Ecosystem Indicators is the next logical step for our caring communities to take.

Once you have had a chance to review and consider the Dashboard Indicators offered here by our Team, we encourage you to share your thoughts, questions and Dashboard improvement ideas with us.

In providing any input you may have concerning the Dashboard to our Team, please feel free to speak with any of our Team members as you may wish. However, if you *feel we may be able to improve the Dashboard as a whole, please provide that general sort of input about the Dashboard to me.*

Please also feel free to respond directly to the ‘Champions’ noted on the attached spreadsheet *concerning the specific indicators within each of their respective families of measures if you might like to address an individual Dashboard indicator or family of indicators more specifically.* They are the Team’s designated experts with the select indicators listed in their families of indicators, and I believe they would be the best persons to address any specific, scientific or logistical questions that you may have about the indicators the Team has selected within their designated families of measures.

One way or the other, please do share your thoughts about the newly proposed Dashboard of Ecosystem Indicators with us.

We look forward to hearing from you with any questions, concerns or improvement ideas you may want to share. Please feel free to call or email me and the other Indicators Action Team members about the Dashboard (see contact information provided for the Indicators Action Team members as noted above and for me below).

Thank you for your support of the Team’s Dashboard development efforts, as well as for your leadership on the Ecosystem Coordination Board.

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